



MEDIA RELEASE

Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dr. Heidi Miller, Anoka-Hennepin Schools, Selected NAESP Outstanding Assistant Principal™ from Minnesota



(Roseville, MN, Dec. 17, 2021) – Dr. Heidi Miller, assistant principal of Rum River Elementary School in the Anoka-Hennepin Schools District, and a member of the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA), is Minnesota's 2022 NAESP National Outstanding Assistant Principal. MESPA and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) present this prestigious award.

The National Outstanding Assistant Principal™ program was established in 2011 to honor assistant principals who are doing a superb job in their roles. NAESP is committed to preparing assistant principals to step into the principal role. This program promotes educational excellence for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade (PreK-8) schooling and calls attention to the fundamental importance of the assistant principal. NAESP will share their successes and best practices in a practical document for other principals to utilize.

Lynn Shereé Lesmeister, a kindergarten teacher at Rum River Elementary, singled out Dr. Miller's dedication and attitude as some of her greatest strengths. Lesmeister said, "I have been an educator for over 30 years and I have never experienced someone in her position with such a combination of professionalism, drive, and warmth. She radiates positivity."

Dr. Miller considers collaboration to be one of her best practices as an educator. She explained that staff groups meet weekly to analyze student data and have open conversations about what is working, what needs to change, and create an action plan.

She said, “Establishing vulnerable and supportive teams throughout our school sets the tone of our school’s positive culture and happy staff morale.” Dr. Miller attributes improvements in academic achievement, staff morale, and decreases in undesirable behaviors at Rum River to this collaborative practice.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Dr. Miller recognized the major shift taking place in her school and took the opportunity to build practices that would support the entire school community. She explained, “I worked with my teachers to ensure that their needs were met, that they felt supported and cared about and that we were able to successfully move forward as a united team.” She considers shifting the educational practices at Rum River while protecting their vibrant school atmosphere to be one of her greatest accomplishments.

“Dr. Miller has a clear vision of excellence in teaching and learning and is able to convey this vision to staff members, students, and parents in a positive and collaborative manner,” said Jeffrey Clusiau, principal at Rum River Elementary school. He praised her balanced leadership and holistic approach to the Assistant Principalship saying, “She provides consistent and fair leadership to staff members while supporting the mission of the school and school district by taking on a wide range of duties and responsibilities within the school.”

Dr. Miller has been working in the field of education for more than 10 years, serving as a classroom teacher, literacy specialist, and administrative intern before becoming Assistant Principal of Rum River Elementary in 2019. After completing her bachelor’s degree at Northwestern College in St. Paul, Dr. Miller received both her master’s degree and her educational doctorate from Bethel University in Arden Hills.

“I am honored and humbled to be the recipient of this award,” said Dr. Miller. “This recognition would not be possible without my school’s dedication, determination, and grit. Together, we are all committed to educating our students and meeting their needs.”

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MESPA is the professional association of Minnesota’s elementary and middle level principals. With the vision to “be the premiere resource for preparing today’s principals for tomorrow and a strong leading voice for public education” and a statewide membership of 950 principals, MESPA has represented Minnesota’s principals since 1950. MESPA is affiliated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals and its 29,500 members nationwide.

MESPA Mission: Minnesota Elementary School Principals’ Association is dedicated to promoting and improving education for children and youth, strengthening the role as educational leader for elementary and middle level principals, and collaborating with partners in education to assist in achieving these goals.

The NAESP Foundation is partnering with **The Pearson Foundation** in this endeavor. The Pearson Foundation extends Pearson’s commitment to education by partnering with leading nonprofit, civic, and business organizations to provide financial, organizational, and publishing assistance across the globe. The NAESP Foundation advances excellence, innovation, and equity in schools by endowing leadership and learning for principals for the benefit of all children.